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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/28), which provides information on the financial performance of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) for the period from mid-September 1992 to 31 December 1993 and the cost estimates for UNOMSA for the period from 1 January to 31 July 1994. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information to the Committee.

2. In paragraph 16 of his report, the Secretary-General outlines the actions that would appear to be required to be taken by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session in connection with the financing of UNOMSA.

3. The savings (overruns) incurred in respect of the main objects of expenditure of UNOMSA for the period mid-September 1992 to 31 December 1993 are summarized in annex I to the report, with supplementary information thereon provided in annex II. The Advisory Committee notes that, according to the performance report for that period, the projected expenditure for a number of items varies considerably from the cost estimates for the period. For example, there are substantial savings under general temporary assistance, consultants, travel, and rental of aircraft, and large overexpenditure on salaries, vehicle operation and communications. The Committee recalls that substantial savings and overexpenditures in an operation should be well explained in the performance report.

4. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 19 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/28) that $61,200 (overrun) for the period from mid-September 1992 to 31 December 1993 will be reflected in the second performance report under section 2 of the programme budget for 1992-1993.

5. The Advisory Committee was informed that as at 3 December 1993 there were 60 international staff, comprising one Chief of Mission, a Deputy Chief of Mission, 50 observers and eight support staff. The Secretary-General proposes an addition of 56 international staff, comprising 50 observers (already approved by the Security Council) 1/ and six support staff, effective 1 December 1993.

6. In paragraph 9 of the report, the Secretary-General proposes to create as at 1 November 1993 a temporary post at the Assistant Secretary-General level for the Chief of Mission of UNOMSA and the Deputy Chief of Mission to occupy the post at the D-2 level. In addition, in paragraphs 10 and 11, he proposes to provide for the Senior Advisor/Observer (currently on loan from the Department of Political Affairs), the post at the D-1 level currently occupied by the Deputy Head of Mission, as well as establishing 10 observer posts at the P-5 level. The Committee has no objection to these proposals.

7. The Secretary-General estimates the cost for the period 1 January to 31 July 1994 at $8,994,100. Annexes IV and V to his report (A/C.5/48/28) provide a summary statement and supplementary information in respect of this estimate.

8. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 14 of the report that the above estimates relate only to the requirements of the Mission prior to and after the election, without taking into account possible additional electoral requirements. Should relevant decisions be made concerning specific additional requirements, and/or the extension of the Mission beyond 31 July 1994, the Secretary-General would seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into related commitments under the terms of the General Assembly resolution to be adopted on unforseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1994-1995.

9. Upon inquiry as to the high cost of premises, the Advisory Committee was informed that negotiations are under way to obtain premises at reasonable cost. The Committee trusts that every effort will be made to seek the Government's assistance in procuring office space with minimum charge to the United Nations.

10. With regard to general purchase of materials and service, the Advisory Committee reiterates its recommendation that, whenever cost-effective and technically feasible, every reasonable effort should be made by the Secretariat, in accordance with established procedures, to acquire services, resources and materials from local area sources (A/47/896, para. 13). In this regard, the Committee was informed that office furniture would be purchased locally.

11. Taking into account its observations, the Advisory Committee, without prejudice to such decisions as the General Assembly may take on the mode of financing of UNOMSA, recommends that the estimate of $8,994,100 for UNOMSA should be approved for the period from 1 January to 31 July 1994.

Notes

1/ S/25315 and S/26559.